

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Rose Falconer, 91, retired schoolteacher

"About 14, 15 [students to a class]. That time when classes were small. But they didn't know English at all. . . . The Portuguese would speak Portuguese. Hawaiians, Hawaiian. And Japanese, Japanese. We all had to learn. So, we had motions. Like, 'Up, up in the sky, the little birds fly' and things like that."

Rose Louise Falconer, the seventh of 16 children, was born at Hualalai, Kona, on June 21, 1890. Her parents, Emilia and Manuel Goularte Silva, immigrated from Portugal. The Silva family, also known as "Paiko," moved from Hualalai to Holualoa where Rose graduated from school at the age of 16. She attended Normal School in Honolulu, but before graduating returned to Kona to teach.

In 1910, Rose married Thomas Jefferson Driver and taught school for about three years. Subsequently, she and her husband moved to the Philippines where they engaged in the lumber business. After their return to Kona in 1918, Rose went back to teaching. Thomas Driver passed away in 1939. In 1942, Rose married a Scot, William George Falconer, who later became Commissioner of Education for West Hawaii.

During her many years of teaching, Rose taught first grade and Hawaiian arts and crafts. Rose retired from teaching in ca. 1964 and for the next ten years worked with handicapped children at Konawaena School. Today, at 91, she participates in the Senior Citizens Program at Yano Hall and Kailua, where she still teaches macrame.

Tape No. 9-23-1-80
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Rose Falconer (RF)
December 9, 1980
Captain Cook, Kona, Hawaii
BY: Faye Komagata (FK)

FK: This is an interview with Mrs. Rose Falconer at the Kona Regional Senior Center in Captain Cook. Today's date is December 9, 1980.

Mrs. Falconer, can you tell me when you were born and where?

RF: I was born June 21, 1890 at Hualalai Ranch between Mauna Loa and Hualalai.

FK: What was the name of the ranch?

RF: Hualalai Ranch. My father worked for the Greenwells way up there. They owned a ranch my father worked for.

FK: Which Greenwell was that?

RF: The old Henry [Nicholas] Greenwell. The father of all these Greenwells here (chuckles).

FK: Did he work very long for the Greenwells?

RF: He worked till we grew and till we moved to Holualoa. About five years.

FK: Where were your parents from?

RF: My mother came from Madeira and my father came from the Azores.

FK: Oh, in Portugal?

RF: Uh huh [yes]. They met in Honolulu. (Laughs)

FK: Do you know when they came?

RF: Oh, no. I don't remember.

FK: What were they doing before they came to Kona?

RF: Just travelling, I guess. Moving from one place to another.

FK: What kind of work were they doing? Do you know?

RF: No.

FK: How about with the Greenwell Ranch? What was. . . .

RF: Cattle. Raise cattle.

FK: How many children were there in your family?

RF: My mother had 16 children. Ten girls and six boys.

FK: And what number were you?

RF: I was number six.

FK: Do you remember anything of Hualalai [Ranch]?

RF: Well, I remember being there in the little church. We had a little church, where the priest would come once a month. It's so vivid in my mind, that little church. (Laughs)

FK: Were there a lot of people there? Do you remember?

RF: Oh, no. Just the ranches, where my father and a few cowboys were.

FK: When did you move to Holualoa?

RF: Well, when I was five years old, so must have been 1895.

FK: Did your whole family move?

RF: Yeah, we all moved up there. They built a little school there. We were Hawaiians then--under the Hawaiian government. And they built a two-room school at Holualoa. My mother believed in education, so we went to school.

FK: Was that one of the reasons you moved?

RF: Yeah.

FK: What did your family do for a living after that--your parents--after you moved to Holualoa?

RF: My father raised coffee. Planted coffee and raised. We had a few cows.

FK: Do you know how many acres of land you had?

RF: No, I don't remember.

FK: Did you lease the land or did your father buy the land?

RF: Buy it. He bought it.

FK: What part of Holualoa was that?

RF: It's up there at where. . . . You know the junction there? Going to Kailua, the road . . .

FK: Oh, by Honokohau?

RF: No, by Holualoa. You know, there's a junction? About a half a mile from the junction.

FK: Oh, near Kimura Lauhala Store?

RF: Yeah. Between. In there. And we walked to school. They built the Holualoa School, and we had a two-room school.

FK: Do you recall who your teachers were?

RF: Well, I remember the tall teacher. She looked like a consumptive. (Chuckles) And she taught with a stick in her hand. We couldn't talk at that time. We couldn't make a noise. Bang would go. . . . Yeah, the good old days. But we learned.

FK: What language did you speak at home?

RF: Portuguese.

FK: So, how was school, then, if you spoke . . .

RF: It was easy because my mother taught us to read. Before we went to school, we knew the letters and things like that. We learned to read in Portuguese. So, English was easy.

FK: Can you describe your area of Holualoa before? Where you were living?

RF: There were no neighbors. The nearest neighbor would be about a quarter of a mile away. We were all scattered.

FK: What kind of house did you live in?

RF: The house is there, yet. Still there. Oh, no, my father built a house before we moved down.

FK: A wooden house?

RF: A big house. We had a big family then (chuckles), so he believed in a big house.

FK: So, you had rooms? How many rooms did you have in your house?

RF: We had about four bedrooms, parlor, dining room, kitchen.

FK: Can you tell me what kind of foods your family ate?

RF: Oh, we ate everything. Whatever was at hand. My father had a big vegetable. . . . The Portuguese believe in vegetables, you know. We had a big vegetable garden. About two acres, just garden. Taro, sweet potatoes, corn. And then, raised pigs and cows. We had our milk.

FK: Did you eat any Portuguese type of cooking?

RF: Oh, yes. That's all we had.

FK: How was that different from what people eat now?

RF: Oh, we had different We had stone ovens for baking the bread, which you don't have today. Because a Portuguese can't live without bread.

(Laughter)

FK: Did you eat any fish, also?

RF: When they went fishing.

FK: Did you keep any horses or donkeys?

RF: Oh, yeah. We had horses. I rode to school from where I lived, to Holualoa, to Honokohau School to teach there.

FK: At that time, how do you think your parents' or your family's work or home compared with your neighbors or the other people in the community?

RF: Well, we all lived the best way we could. And they all lived--they were all happy in their way. Yeah, they were all happy in their way.

FK: Were there a lot of Portuguese at the time in Kona?

RF: Oh, yeah. Kona had a lot of Portuguese then. Then, the plantation began to build over there. They moved over there. That's why you find lot of Portuguese over in the plantations.

FK: You mentioned your name was Silva before. But you were called . . .

RF: Yeah. Paiko, over here. The Hawaiians called him. There were so many Silvas, you know, that the Hawaiians said, "Well, we'll call you Paiko. You came from the island of Pico, you know." So, they

called him Paiko.

FK: So, you grew up being called . . .

RF: Paiko. Went to school by the name of Paiko. Till I went to Honolulu, then I (chuckles) . . .

FK: Then you came back to Silva?

RF: Uh huh [yes].

FK: What was taught in school while you were going to Holualoa?

RF: Oh, English The same--the language and numbers.

FK: How was the classroom situation? Did you have many students?

RF: Oh, not

FK: You said there were only two rooms?

RF: Just two rooms. Not many children going to school, then.

FK: Were there less than 20, do you think?

RF: Oh, they'd be about 30.

FK: Per room?

RF: Uh huh [yes].

FK: How were the grades? Were they separated?

RF: Yeah, we had. We didn't have receiving grade, then. First, second, third. Just If you got up to the tenth grade, they were pretty smart.

FK: What was the subject you liked the most?

RF: (Chuckles) Hard to say, because I just learned to live with what I had and like it.

FK: Was there any particular subject you didn't care for in school?

RF: No. Everything was new to me. (Chuckles)

FK: How many years did you attend Holualoa School?

RF: Until I was in the eighth grade. Then I went to Honolulu to Normal School.

FK: Did the other children in your family also?

- RF: Well, I was the only teacher. Then my parents moved to Honolulu, and my brothers went to school there.
- FK: While you were living in Holualoa and growing up there, did you have to help at home?
- RF: Oh, sure. My mother was quite a She organized. We all had our [work] to do.
- FK: What type of work? Can you explain?
- RF: Well, every week, we changed We made beds, because we had lot of beds to make. Clear and sweep. Take care of the floors. Cook. We cleaned the kitchen. We just turned around, rotating.
- FK: How about outside work? Helping on the farm?
- RF: The girls didn't do much farm work. Only coffee time, we went picking coffee.
- FK: So, you picked coffee, also?
- RF: Oh, yeah. (Chuckles) Yeah, I picked coffee. And grind it. (Chuckles)
- FK: Oh, you ground the coffee, too?
- RF: We ground the coffee. Then, we had the hand machines.
- FK: By hand? And how about washing and all of that?
- RF: Washing it and everything. Drying it. Everything is done . . .
- FK: You had a [drying] platform?
- RF: Yeah, we had a platform.
- FK: Who did you sell your coffee to?
- RF: My father sold his coffee mostly to Yokoyama. You know, Yokoyama had the store down below at Kamalumu. We'd buy the groceries there and sell the coffee.
- FK: How about your cattle? Your cattle, you said you had some. How did you sell that?
- RF: Well, people would just buy it--around. Of course, we killed our own beef.
- FK: How did you feel about picking coffee?
- RF: Oh, I hated it. (Laughs) Can't tell a kid to do anything.

(Laughter)

RF: Get up early in the morning, go out in the coffee field.

FK: What did you use to put the coffee in?

RF: Baskets. Or bags. We'd get bags and tie it around your waist.

FK: Did all the children have to help at that time?

RF: Oh, yeah. Everybody. We all had our work to do.

FK: Was like a little army. (Laughs)

RF: Yeah. Oh, was well organized for a big family.

FK: Did your father ever have to hire anyone to help?

RF: Well, no, not---well, like working on the farm, planting vegetables, or clearing land, he probably had that.

FK: While you were living in Holualoa, did you notice changes that came about, like the ethnic distribution of people or . . .

RF: Well, then, the Japanese came in. There were no Japanese there when we moved there. They came in then. There was lot of Portuguese around. Kona had a lot of Portuguese then. I remember when I saw the first Japanese. (Chuckles)

FK: About when was that? When you were in school, already?

RF: No, before I went to school. Then, Yoko---what was his name? The Japanese built a store there near us.

FK: The Kimura Store?

RF: No, wasn't the Kimura. Was another one. Yokoyama was down Kamalumu way afterwards. But this man, I can't remember.

FK: What kind of things did you buy in the store? Do you recall?

RF: Fish, rice, sugar, salt. Things like that.

FK: What did you do for recreation?

RF: (Laughs) Play marbles. (Laughs)

FK: Oh, you played marbles, too?

(Laughter)

RF: We played buttons and marbles. We had no baseball.

FK: How did you play marbles?

RF: Make five holes, and (chuckles) shoot the marbles into the holes. Kids find a way. And then, sticks. Did you ever jump the sticks? We had so many sticks, and we'd jump. First we started with one, then with two, then three, then four, then five . . .

FK: Oh, you separate the sticks?

RF: Yeah. Then baseball came in.

FK: Did you have balls and bats?

RF: We made our own balls.

FK: Oh, how was that?

RF: Roll rags around (chuckles) and across, sewed it up. And got a stick for a bat. We managed. We were still Hawaiians [i.e., citizens under the Hawaiian monarchy] when baseball came in.

FK: Were there a lot of Hawaiians living around . . .

RF: Oh, yeah. Quite a few around.

FK: What did the girls do? Did they all play that, too?

RF: Well, those that wanted. But mostly, the girls did housework.

FK: Did you go to the beach?

RF: Oh, no. (Chuckles) I know I didn't go to the beach till I was about ten years old. The school had a beach picnic, and that's the time I went.

FK: How did you go down?

RF: The teacher got a big wagon--we didn't have automobiles then--and took the school kids down to the beach.

FK: What did you do down there?

RF: Just look around (chuckles), because we couldn't swim. (Chuckles) It was new to us.

FK: Oh, many of the other children hadn't gone, too?

RF: Yeah. Because we're quite a ways from the beach.

FK: Did you have any kind of community events or . . .

RF: They had the church events in the church.

FK: What kind of events did you have that would include other people?

RF: Well, the Portuguese up there, the Catholics have what they called the Holy Ghost Day. That was quite a parade. Christmastime, we always had a good time on Christmas. Hawaiians used to go serenading from house to house.

FK: Did you serve them anything when they came by?

RF: Oh, yeah.

FK: What kind of . . .

RF: Oh, cake, wine. My father made this wine, so (chuckles) we served wine. Then, the new people came in, and they began to get rowdy. And it had to be stopped. They couldn't go from house to house anymore. Isn't that too bad?

FK: It must have been nice.

RF: Yeah. We looked forward to the serenaders to come around every Christmas.

FK: Was there any other type of celebration that you participated in?

RF: School celebrations. We always had a big school celebration. Christmastime was a big day in school.

FK: What did you have to do?

RF: Oh, they had school programs. Children would have speeches. Oh, we all had speeches.

FK: The whole family would attend that?

RF: No, no. Different ones in different classes.

FK: Did the children bring goodies to school like they do today?

RF: They brought what they had. Not much, but something.

FK: How did the children dress for school?

RF: Mostly (chuckles) rough. Not the fancy clothes they have today, but they dressed nicely for the time.

FK: Were there any holidays celebrated?

RF: Oh, yeah. We had Christmas, Easter. We didn't have Fourth of July, though. (Laughs)

FK: On those occasions, did you find a lot of people turned out?

RF: Oh, yeah. The Portuguese up at Holualoa had what they called the Holy Ghost Day. They used to parade. Before the Sunday, they used to make bread and deliver bread to the different members of the church and things like that. We always looked forward to that.

FK: Seems like a busy time . . .

RF: They find amusement.

FK: Was there anything significant that stands out in your mind in the way of an economic or social event while you were young there? Any war or anything like that?

RF: Well, we were small and those things didn't mean a thing to us. People talked about war and discomfort and all of that. Didn't mean a thing to the kids.

FK: How about any kind of illnesses that . . .

RF: Oh, yeah. Had the measles. I was very fat when I was small. And when I got the measles, I got it hard. (Chuckles)

FK: Did you have any doctors at that time?

RF: Only Dr. Hayashi. The old doctor. He was the only doctor there for a long time.

FK: While you were growing up, what were your expectations as an adult?

RF: (Chuckles) At that time, we just thought of growing up. (Chuckles) Then, I don't know. Just something turned out.

FK: You said that after the eighth grade, you went to Honolulu?

RF: Uh huh [yes]. Went to Normal School.

FK: Was that your whole family?

RF: No, just me.

FK: Just yourself. How old were you at that time?

RF: Sixteen. Yeah, then, I went to Normal School. I didn't graduate from Normal School. The Holualoa principal wanted me to come back and teach school there, so I came back. But I got my diploma that way.

FK: Where were you staying in Honolulu?

RF: With one of my friends. My mother's friends.

FK: How long were you there?

RF: About six months.

FK: Did you like Honolulu?

RF: We didn't travel much. Just from home to school, and school to home.

FK: What kind of differences did you find in Honolulu and Kona?

RF: Well, people are people wherever you are, so it didn't make I minded my business.

FK: You started teaching at Holualoa when you returned. How many students did you have in your . . .

RF: About 14, 15. That time when classes were small. But they didn't know English at all.

FK: What languages were they speaking?

RF: The Portuguese would speak Portuguese. Hawaiians, Hawaiian. And Japanese, Japanese. (Laughs) We all had to learn. So, we had motions. [RF motions with hands.] Like, "Up, up in the sky, the little birds fly" (laughs) and things like that.

FK: It was teaching them a language, also?

RF: Teaching language.

FK: Did you play games with them?

RF: Oh, yeah. Games were very important.

FK: What other things did you do? What kind of games?

RF: (Sings) "Go round and round the circle (chuckles), go round and round" They were learning language and

FK: Singing. What grade did you teach?

RF: I taught receiving grade and first grade, mostly.

FK: It's called "receiving grade"?

RF: Yeah, we had receiving grade then. They don't have it now.

FK: What was that?

RF: Getting them acquainted with the language.

FK: Did those children go at the same time, also?

RF: Oh, they all went. Oh, yeah. They all went together.

FK: Did you teach more than one grade at one time?

RF: Oh, yeah. I taught three grades at one time.

FK: How did you keep it separated?

RF: Just in different groups. The same as groups, you know. A big class has groups. While they were busy, you have another group.

FK: Did you have any disciplinary problems?

RF: Oh, we had our daily problems. (Chuckles) But the kids at that time obeyed. They obeyed the teacher. The teacher was the boss then. You had no trouble with the kids.

FK: How about parents?

RF: Parents were willing to have their children educated.

FK: How much were you being paid at that time?

RF: (Chuckles) The first pay I got was \$33 a month. That was big money. (Laughs)

FK: Were there any kind of benefits?

RF: No. No benefits. Oh, no. This was in the 1900s, remember?

FK: Where were you living then?

RF: At Holualoa.

FK: At your home?

RF: Uh huh [yes]. I used to ride horseback to school.

FK: How long did you teach at Holualoa?

RF: I taught there for about three years. Then, I got married. Then, I taught down at Kailua School.

FK: Who did you marry?

RF: Thomas Jefferson Driver.

FK: You were about 19?

RF: Yeah.

FK: Where did you live then?

RF: He was running the railroad for the sugar plantation, so we lived down between Not very far from Kailua, near the sugar mill. We had a sugar mill down there. I guess you don't remember that. (Laughs)

FK: A little bit before my time.

RF: We had a railroad, too, you know.

FK: What kind of work did he do with the railroad?

RF: Run the trains so that the cane got to the sugar mill. He took care of that. We had to cable the sugarcane to the cars, so he took care of that.

FK: At that time, you were still teaching?

RF: Oh, yeah.

FK: How long were you at Kailua School?

RF: About two years.

FK: Were the children any different from Holualoa, as far as . . .

RF: No, mostly Hawaiians, though. Kinda lazy, a little. (Laughs) You had to wake them up a little bit. But very good kids. Not bad.

FK: Were you teaching the same grade?

RF: Same grade.

FK: After Kailua School, where did you teach?

RF: Then, we left Kona. We went to the Philippines.

FK: When were you at Honokohau?

RF: Oh, boy.

FK: Was that just a short time?

RF: Yeah, short time.

FK: What made you leave for the Philippines?

RF: The plantation closed up. We thought we'd just go travelling. We didn't expect to stay there. We went for a trip. Then, we got to Manila, and some people started talking to my husband about staying, going into the lumber business. So, he decided he'd try it. So we stayed there five years. We didn't know there was a war going on around us. (Chuckles) Then, after the war, we came back.

FK: So, about when was it that you went to the Philippines?

RF: When was the war? The year 1914, eh? Uh huh [yes]. We went in that year.

FK: Can you describe the Philippines at that time and where you lived?

RF: I lived way down south at the foot of Palawan. There was an island there called Balabac. We went there. Only Moros. What we called "Moros." They all Mohammedans. But we got along beautifully. We got along fine. I don't interfere with religion. Religion doesn't mean very much to . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FK: How about your home?

RF: We had a good home. We had a very good home.

FK: What type of home?

RF: Just the lumber built.

FK: How about your food and everything like that there?

RF: There was a little Chinese store about two miles from where we lived. So, we'd go down there and buy what we needed. And raised most of our vegetables.

FK: Oh, even there [i.e., Philippines]?

RF: Yeah. Things grew fast down there.

FK: Were you homesick at all?

RF: No. I never got homesick. I didn't believe in getting homesick.

FK: What were you doing while you were living in the Philippines?

RF: Let's see, what was I doing? Some of the Moros wanted me to teach them. So, I taught them.

FK: Taught them English, you mean?

RF: Yeah, uh huh. Yeah, they were ambitious. They could read and write in their language. So, it wasn't hard to teach them.

FK: How was the lumber business, then?

RF: Very good, that time.

FK: What kind of wood?

RF: The wood was mahogany. And there was a wood called ipil. The Philippine mahogany and this ipil. Ipil was to make cigar boxes, things like that. Soft wood.

FK: Where was he selling?

RF: When we had enough lumber to load a ship, we had an agent in Manila. We'd tell him to send a ship down. Send the ship, and we'd load.

FK: Where was the final destination of all the lumber units? The lumber you were shipping out . . .

RF: We had an agent in Manila, and he sold the . . .

FK: Around the world?

RF: I don't know what he did with it. He took care of it.

FK: What made you return to Hawaii?

RF: After the war, we decided we'd come back.

FK: What happened to your business, then?

RF: Somebody took it over.

FK: What did you do when you returned to Hawaii?

RF: Well, wasn't long till somebody wanted me to go teaching. (Chuckles)
So, I went to teach.

FK: What about your husband?

RF: He retired. Took care around the house and so forth.

FK: Did you return to the Big Island?

RF: Yeah. We came to Kona.

FK: Where did you live then?

RF: We stayed at Holualoa for a while, and then we bought the home at Keauhou.

FK: Where you are now?

RF: Uh huh [yes], where we are now.

FK: When you were growing up in Holualoa, how was water there?

RF: Well, we had built our tanks. So, we always had water.

FK: I know you have a water tank now at Keauhou. Do you still use it?

RF: No, no. We don't use it.

FK: What was your husband doing at home? Did he just stay home and worked in the garden?

RF: Yeah. When we came back, he didn't do any outside work.

FK: Where did you teach school when you returned?

RF: I taught down at Keauhou School. There was a two-room school there. (Chuckles)

FK: Who did you teach with?

RF: Whole batch. I forget. Quite a few.

FK: What grade were you teaching?

RF: What they call "receiving grade," and then the first grade. Those two grades.

FK: And who took care of the other grades?

RF: Other teachers took care of them.

FK: What were the school hours?

RF: From 9 [a.m.] to 2 [p.m.].

FK: You were teaching from about 1918 or '19, then . . .

RF: Oh, I taught for over 60 years.

FK: I mean, when you came back from the Philippines?

RF: Yeah. Uh huh.

FK: How long were you at Keauhou School? Until what year?

RF: Ten years, I was down there. And we started weaving. We did a lot of weaving.

FK: At Keauhou School?

RF: Uh huh [yes].

FK: What kind of weaving was that?

RF: Lau hala weaving.

FK: Who was teaching that?

RF: We had several principals there.

FK: Where did you get your lau hala?

RF: Oh, there was plenty of lau hala all around. Yeah, just go in somebody's cattle field and get your lau hala. The children would bring the lau hala. We had a fair one time, and we got first prize for Hawaiian arts.

FK: Who were you competing with?

RF: It was a school exhibit for different schools.

FK: In Kona?

RF: Uh huh [yes]. The Hawaiian art was dying down, and so they . . .

FK: Were trying to revive it?

RF: Uh huh [yes].

FK: This was with all the schools in Kona?

RF: Yeah. I went from school to school teaching weaving.

FK: Oh, you, yourself, went from school to school?

RF: Yeah. Rode horseback. (Chuckles)

FK: You mentioned that you started this art, then, around 1930? What routes did you go from school to school, and which schools?

RF: Well, I started Konawaena, and then down south, Napoopoo. And then, one day, Holualoa, and Honokohau.

FK: Did you just travel the main roads?

RF: Yeah, travelled the main road. No automobiles there. You could ride horseback. (Chuckles)

FK: When you were going by horseback to teach, did you have to take any supplies with you?

RF: Not much. Just my lunch, whatever lunch I had.

FK: What kind of horse did you ride?

RF: Oh, anything that would take me. Four legs. (Laughs)

FK: Was it your own horse?

RF: Yeah, my own. We kept horses.

FK: How much were you paid then for doing this?

RF: About \$40 a month. We thought that was big money. A dollar was worth a dollar, then. Today, it's not worth ten cents.

FK: You had your set schools that you were going to?

RF: Oh, yeah. We had the regular program.

FK: How many hours did you teach the lau hala weaving?

RF: About two hours and a half.

FK: Did you teach anything else besides weaving?

RF: No, at that time, was only weaving. Hawaiian arts.

FK: What were you weaving?

RF: Mats, baskets. At that time, we made dinner sets.

FK: You mean, like place mats?

RF: Place mats. Floor mats, things like that. Plenty of lau hala. You could use to make big things. Coffee baskets. Then the coffee baskets came in.

FK: How did you get around to doing baskets, though? You said the Hawaiians didn't make baskets.

RF: Somebody must have started it. I know I learned it.

FK: What did everyone do with their woven things afterwards?

RF: They sold it to, like Yokoyama Store. Yokoyama Store, there in Holualoa. The people would take it to them, and they would dispose of it.

FK: Did the students, also, you mean?

RF: Uh huh [yes].

FK: Oh, so they were making it to sell?

RF: Yeah, yeah. Or exchange.

FK: How was the quality of the children's weaving, though?

RF: Very good.

FK: Did you have any help with this weaving?

RF: In what way?

FK: Did other teachers help you?

RF: No. They didn't know how to do it either.

FK: How did you learn or who taught you?

RF: I don't know. I just learned it somehow. I had an older sister. She liked to do that type of work. I followed her.

FK: How did you get this job, though?

RF: Well, I was the only one that could (chuckles) weave then.

FK: Were you employed by a particular school?

RF: No, I was employed by the Board of Education.

FK: Was this program anywhere else?

RF: Not that I know of. Was at Holualoa, at least.

FK: In Kona. How long did you do this?

RF: For about four or five years. Then, I got tired of it. (Chuckles)

FK: Of riding horseback? (Chuckles) Then, where did you teach after that?

RF: I got married then.

FK: That was in 1942 to Mr. Falconer. Can you tell me about Mr. Falconer? Where he was from?

RF: He was from Scotland. We met here. We got married.

FK: What kind of work was he doing?

RF: He was working for the plantations. He was kind of a salesman between the plantation stores.

FK: Did you remain living in Keauhou?

RF: Yeah, we lived there.

FK: Did you continue teaching?

RF: Yeah, while I was here in Kona.

FK: Where were you teaching after you were married?

RF: Oh, after married, came to Konawaena School.

FK: By that time, there were cars, I guess.

RF: Yeah, we got an automobile, then. (Chuckles)

FK: What grade were you teaching there?

RF: First grade.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 9-47-2-81
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Rose Falconer (RF)
January 6, 1981
Captain Cook, Kona, Hawaii
BY: Faye Komagata (FK)

FK: This is an interview with Mrs. Rose Falconer at Yano Hall in Captain Cook. Today's date is January 6, 1981.

Mrs. Falconer, the last time you mentioned that your husband was a salesman?

RF: Yes.

FK: What else did he do?

RF: He was just a salesman, just something to do.

FK: Later on . . .

RF: He became the commissioner of education.

FK: Was that for just . . .

RF: For Kona.

FK: And from 1942 you were teaching at Konawaena?

RF: Yes.

FK: And what grade was that?

RF: First grade.

FK: When did you retire?

RF: When I was, oh boy, after teaching about 70 years. (I retired from teaching school around 1964 and later taught retarded children for about 10 years.)

FK: Can you tell me more about what you were doing?

RF: Well, we had some retarded children here so we started a group of three. McCoy, Matsubara and (I can't remember the other). Later, Filipino (and Hawaiian) kids and from there it's still working.

FK: You and who else was . . .

RF: I was the only one.

FK: You started this program?

RF: Well, somebody got me to start it.

FK: Oh, I see.

RF: Then we became a part of the Board of Education. Oh, Mrs. McCoy (was one of the organizers). Then we became a part of the Board of Education.

FK: What kind of activities did you have for the children?

RF: Well, we had different types (depending on the child). Moving objects.

FK: Were they play activities?

RF: Yeah, play activities. They had to learn to live together, you know.

FK: Did you have a classroom?

RF: Yeah, we had one. We started the thing near the library, the old school. Used to be Konawaena School there, near the library.

FK: Then when did you start teaching macrame?

RF: Oh boy. Oh, about 15 years ago.

FK: Why did you switch to macrame? You were doing weaving.

RF: Oh, something different to do.

FK: Who were you teaching, on the macrame?

RF: Boy, that's so long ago.

FK: Was this at school?

RF: No, not at school. At home.

FK: At home, I see. I understand you also came to the senior citizens' [center] to help?

- RF: Oh yeah. If they wanted it.
- FK: While you were teaching school, was there need for much discipline?
- RF: Not much need for discipline. The children seemed to obey the teachers. Very little discipline we had to use.
- FK: And as far as your weaving goes, many people have mentioned having taken your classes.
- RF: Oh yes. Weaving was a big--we took the first prize here in West Hawaii, the territory fair.
- FK: And I heard that you also made fancy baskets and things, too.
- RF: Oh yeah, mm hmm.
- FK: Where would you have gotten supplies?
- RF: Well, material, we had plenty material all around Kona then. Lau hala trees everywhere.
- FK: Someone also mentioned that you had them use pumpkin, vines of a pumpkin?
- RF: Depended if you wanted colored work.
- FK: What did you do with that?
- RF: To trim, trim the mats.
- FK: For decorative . . .
- RF: Yes, to decorate them.
- FK: Where did you get these ideas?
- RF: Well, as life went on, you know, you pick things up.
- FK: Was it experimental, I mean, did you try these things?
- RF: Experimental, try, try new things. Nobody else could. They didn't---the Hawaiians wouldn't teach you or help you in any way. Then you'd have to form your own ideas.
- FK: Did you ever take the children on excursions?
- RF: No, we didn't.
- FK: How was the staff at the time you were teaching through the war until you retired?

RF: The staff?

FK: Yeah, the other teachers.

RF: Oh, everybody got along beautifully. I don't remember we were quarrelling in school. I guess we all kept our tempers to ourselves.

(Laughter)

FK: During the war, did you commute to school?

RF: Yeah. I either rode horseback or drove a car. Yeah, I used to ride clear down to Ho'okena School.

FK: Did you pack a lunch with you?

RF: You had to take. Sandwich . . .

FK: Do you recall any major earthquakes?

RF: Oh, we had earthquakes nearly every month here. We don't have them anymore. I was so scared, I could hear them coming.

FK: You could hear?

RF: Yeah, you could hear the banging.

FK: Was there much damage that you recall?

RF: No damage that I know of.

FK: Can you mention the names of some of the teachers you were working with for a long time?

RF: Mrs. Ackerman, Alice Hoapili, that's about all I can remember.

FK: How about lesson plans?

RF: Oh, we had to write out lesson plans every week. Hand them in, too. The principal had to look over them.

FK: How was that as compared to now?

RF: Well you have to have a certain kind of plan today anyway.

FK: I guess you had to meet your deadline.

RF: Well, you had to hand your workbooks in every Friday. That's about all. You had to do it so . . .

FK: What about children who may not have had paper or pencil, you know . . .

- RF: Well, we had slates then. (I used slates, too, and was proud to take it to school. We did lots of things with the slate--draw, write.)
- FK: Oh, they had slates.
- RF: Oh, slates, yeah. (We bought them. There were different sizes.)
- FK: How was the [school] coffee schedule, did you . . .
- RF: Well, when coffee season, then we'd close down for two, three weeks.
- FK: Did you have any problems with students who may have rested because they'd have to help at home?
- RF: Well, they got permission to stay home and work if they had to, but it was very seldom. The people here in Kona were good, they didn't take their children away from school to work. Very seldom we would have absentees.
- FK: Many of them had to travel great distances.
- RF: Oh yeah, they walked, too. But they all had fun.
- FK: Do you recall some of the games that the children played?
- RF: Marbles. (Laughs) Marbles, buttons, the kids used to play with buttons.
- FK: Oh really?
- RF: Oh yeah. Buttons, boy, we used to.
- FK: What did you do with the buttons?
- RF: We made holes and then bet. You had to bet five, then you'd throw them into the hole and then shoot them in. Then the person who got the last button in was the winner. Oh, we had fun in our own way. Then we had holes that you skip from one hole to another, did you ever play that?
- FK: No.
- RF: Oh, we had hopscotch, that was different than the holes. We got along. Swings, baseball . . .
- FK: Baseball?
- RF: Oh, we got in with the boys. We were rough, too.
- FK: This was when you were young?

RF: Oh yeah.

FK: Even the girls . . .

RF: The boys were rough so the girls had to be rough, too. There was no, "Excuse me." Bang, it was the girl.

FK: Girls or boys, huh?

RF: Oh yeah.

FK: Any other games you used to play?

RF: No, we had to stay at home when we come home from school, and get to work.

FK: Mrs. Falconer, you lived in Kona almost all of your life?

RF: Yeah, except five years. We went out and travelled, too.

FK: How do you feel about Kona?

RF: I still like it. I still like it, I like the people here. Living with the Moors, that was a good test because they said nobody could live with the Moors.

FK: That was in the Philippines?

RF: Mm hmm. And I got along fine.

FK: How about the rest of your family?

RF: I have only one sister left.

FK: You had 16 in your family?

RF: Mm hmm. My youngest sister and I are the only living ones. I'm 90 and she's 89.

FK: Do you get to see your sister very often?

RF: No, I haven't seen her for 20 years.

(Taping stops; then resumes)

FK: [I saw a picture of you on a donkey during a coffee festival.]

RF: For riding the donkey?

FK: When was that?

RF: That was the first coffee festival we had.

FK: How did you get involved with that?

RF: Well, they just picked me up. I used to ride a lot. (Frances Lincoln and I used to ride to the volcano and back; rode all over the country. We'd camp or stay with friends. The husbands stayed home.) Very few people would ride a donkey.

FK: Oh really?

RF: Mm hmm. But I took a chance and rode the donkey.

FK: Were there others that rode the donkey, too [during the first coffee festival parade]?

RF: There was, yeah, I guess there was.

FK: Where did you ride it, I mean, was it a great distance?

RF: Konawaena School. We had to go (from Kainaliu to Konawaena).

FK: That's quite a way. That coffee festival, I understand, was a pretty big event.

RF: Oh yes, it was the first one, yeah, it was.

FK: At that first coffee festival, what kind of events were there?

RF: Well, there was donkey racing, rope pulling, jumping over hurdles.

FK: And a parade, too?

RF: Parade, oh yes.

FK: That was what you participated in?

RF: Yeah, the parade.

FK: Did everyone turn out, like in the community?

RF: Oh, the whole community turned out for the first parade.

FK: Bigger than now?

RF: Oh yeah. It was something new and it was free. (Laughs)

FK: Thank you very much, Mrs. Falconer.

RF: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF KONA

Volume I

ETHNIC STUDIES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

**Ethnic Studies Program
University of Hawaii, Manoa**

JUNE 1981